

Message Text

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ACTION SS-25

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 SSO-00 /026 W
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O P 141705Z APR 78
FM AMEMBASSY BONN
TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 7697
SECDEF WASHDC IMMEDIATE
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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 03 BONN 06941

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MILITARY ADDRESSEES HANDLE AS SPECAT EXCLUSIVE

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SUBJECT: SECRETARY BROWN'S DISCUSSIONS WITH MINISTER
APEL: AWACS AND GEPARD

BEGIN SUMMARY. DURING FORMAL DISCUSSIONS AT THE FRG
DEFENSE MINISTRY ON APRIL 13, THE GERMAN SIDE TOLD
SECRETARY BROWN THAT "MOST BUT NOT ALL" MEMBERS OF
THE BUNDESTAG DEFENSE AND BUDGET COMMITTEES WERE NOW

CONVINCED OF THE MILITARY VALUE OF AWACS. THIS WAS CLEAR FOLLOWING DEFENSE MINISTRY TESTIMONY TO THESE COMMITTEES ON BEHALF OF AWACS ON APRIL 12. HOWEVER, THE PARLIAMENTARIANS EXPECTED MORE MOVEMENT TOWARD GERMANY ON THE "TWO-WAY STREET" AND THEY WERE CONCERNED OVER THE HIGH COST OF AWACS AND ITS MILITARY SURVIVABILITY. APEL SAID THE US DECISION NOT TO PURCHASE OR LEASE GEPARDS WOULD "ENORMOUSLY COMPLICATE" HIS TASK OF OBTAINING A BUNDESTAG "YES" TO THE SYSTEM. HE SAID HE WOULD CONTINUE TO PUSH FOR AN EARLY POSITIVE DECISION, BUT THAT IT WAS NOT LIKELY TO BE REACHED BEFORE THE WASHINGTON SUMMIT. END SUMMARY.

1. WHILE MINISTER APEL WAS TEMPORARILY AWAY FROM THE CONFERENCE TABLE ATTENDING A BUNDESTAG SESSION, STATE SECRETARY SCHNELL TURNED TO THE QUESTION OF AWACS. HE SAID THAT MINISTER APEL AND OTHER DEFENSE MINISTRY REPRESENTATIVES HAD SPENT SIX HOURS ON APRIL 12 TESTIFYING IN SUPPORT OF AWACS TO THE DEFENSE AND BUDGET COMMITTEES OF THE BUNDESTAG. SCHNELL SAID HE BELIEVED THAT APEL HAD CONVINCED "MOST BUT NOT ALL" OF THE MEMBERS OF THE TWO COMMITTEES OF THE MILITARY VALUE OF AWACS. SCHNELL SAID THE MAIN QUESTIONS WHICH THE COMMITTEE MEMBERS RAISED WERE THE FOLLOWING:

(A) THE NEED FOR MORE MOVEMENT TOWARD GERMANY ON
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THE "TWO-WAY STREET" AS A KIND OF "COMPENSATION" FOR FRG PARTICIPATION IN AWACS;

(B) THE HIGH COST OF GERMAN PARTICIPATION; AND

(C) THE MILITARY SURVIVABILITY OF AWACS.

2. AS REGARDS POINT (A) ABOVE, SCHNELL SAID THE WORD "COMPENSATION" WAS "ON EVERYONE'S LIPS" IN THE BUNDESTAG, AND THAT SEVERAL COMMITTEE MEMBERS HAD ASKED ABOUT THE POSSIBILITY OF A US PURCHASE OR LEASE OF GEPARDS.

3. IN RESPONSE TO THIS, SECRETARY BROWN STATED THAT, AS HE HAD INFORMED MINISTER APEL IN THEIR PRIVATE DISCUSSION JUST BEFORE THE FORMAL MEETING, THE UNITED STATES WOULD NOT BE ABLE TO BUY OR LEASE THE GEPARD. WHILE HE REGRETTED THAT DECISION, FURTHER STUDY OF THE IDEA HAD SHOWN THAT IT WAS NOT FEASIBLE. THE SECRETARY POINTED OUT THAT A US ORDER FOR GEPARDS COULD NOT BE PLACED BEFORE 1979, AND THAT THE GEPARDS COULD NOT BE AVAILABLE BEFORE 1981. THE COMPARABLE US SYSTEM, NOW BEING DEVELOPED, WOULD BE AVAILABLE BY 1983

AND WOULD FULFILL US REQUIREMENTS.

4. THE SECRETARY SAID THIS DID NOT MEAN THAT THE US
COULD NOT FIND OTHER WAYS TO BE FORTHCOMING TOWARD THE
FRG ON THE "TWO-WAY STREET." HE SAID THE GERMAN SIDE
HAD, IN A SENSE, REGARDED US ADOPTION OF THE GERMAN
TANK GUN AS A "LINKAGE" TO FRG PARTICIPATION IN AWACS.
THE US HAD AGREED TO ADOPT THE GERMAN TANK GUN. THE

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SECRETARY SAID IT WAS DIFFICULT FOR HIM TO SEE HOW A

US LEASE (OR PURCHASE) OF GEPARDS COULD NOW BE HELD UP
AS AN ADDITIONAL "LINKAGE" TO AWACS.

5. THE SECRETARY SAID HE SAW AWACS AS SIMPLY ANOTHER
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STEP IN A SERIES OF COOPERATIVE VENTURES INCLUDING THE
TANK GUN, US PURCHASE OF GERMAN VEHICLES FOR US FORCES,
ETC. SCHNELL ACKNOWLEDGED THIS POINT AND SAID IT HAD
ALSO BEEN MADE TO THE BUNDESTAG MEMBERS. HE ALSO
MENTIONED THE POSSIBILITY OF PURCHASE OF GERMAN TELEPHONE
EQUIPMENT FOR US FORCES IN GERMANY AS AN IMPORTANT
ECONOMIC BENEFIT WHICH MIGHT FACILITATE GERMAN AGREE-
MENT TO AWACS. (DISCUSSION OF THE TELEPHONE ISSUE
IS REPORTED BY SEPTTEL.)

6. SECRETARY BROWN AND ASSISTANT SECRETARY MCGIFFERT
BOTH EMPHASIZED THAT THE TOTAL VALUE OF GERMAN
INDUSTRIAL COLLABORATION IN AWACS, AND THE ECONOMIC
BENEFITS TO THE GERMANS OF LOCATING THE AWACS MAIN
OPERATING BASE (MOB) IN THE FRG WOULD EQUAL OR EXCEED,
OVER TIME, THE VALUE OF THE GERMAN
CONTRIBUTION TO AWACS.

7. THE GERMAN SIDE SEEMED NOT ENTIRELY CONVINCED OF
THIS, AND POINTED OUT THAT (A) THE BENEFITS DERIVING
FROM THE OPERATION OF THE MOB WOULD BE SPREAD OUT
OVER A LONG TIME; AND (B) THE BENEFITS WOULD BE TO
THE GERMAN ECONOMY AS A WHOLE AND WOULD NOT HELP THE
DEFENSE MINISTRY WITH ITS BUDGET DIFFICULTIES ON
AWACS PARTICIPATION.

8. STATE SECRETARY SCHNELL REFERRED TO CONCERN IN THE
BUNDESTAG DEFENSE AND BUDGET COMMITTEES OVER THE HIGH
COST OF GERMAN PARTICIPATION IN AWACS. HE SAID MEMBERS
FELT THAT ITALY WAS NOT CONTRIBUTING ENOUGH, PARTICU-
LARLY SINCE IT WOULD BE A MAIN USER ON THE SOUTHERN
FLANK. SCHNELL SAID IT WOULD BE USEFUL FOR THE DEFENSE
MINISTRY, IN ITS DEALINGS WITH THE BUNDESTAG COMMITTEES,
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IF THE ITALIANS COULD BE CONVINCED TO PAY MORE.
SECRETARY BROWN SAID HE WOULD SEE WHAT COULD BE DONE
ON THIS, AND HE MENTIONED THAT HE HAD ALREADY APPEALED
TO MINISTER RUFFINI IN THIS REGARD.

9. SCHNELL SAID THE BUNDESTAG COMMITTEE MEMBERS WERE ALSO UNHAPPY OVER THE FACT THAT FRANCE WOULD DERIVE MAJOR BENEFITS FROM AWACS, THROUGH NADGE, WITHOUT -- IN THEIR VIEW -- SUFFICIENT CONTRIBUTIONS. SCHNELL WONDERED IF SOMETHING COULD BE DONE VIS-A-VIS THE FRENCH NOW THAT THE ELECTIONS ARE OVER.

10. SECRETARY BROWN AND ASSISTANT SECRETARY MCGIFFERT SAID IT MIGHT BE WELL TO APPROACH THE FRENCH AGAIN, BUT THEY EMPHASIZED THAT ANY DEALINGS WITH THE FRENCH SHOULD NOT BE ALLOWED TO DELAY THE NATO AEW SYSTEM. SECRETARY BROWN OBSERVED THAT IT WOULD BE A GOOD PRINCIPLE FOR COUNTRIES -- LIKE FRANCE -- WHICH DO NOT PARTICIPATE IN THE ACQUISITION COSTS TO DO MORE THAN SIMPLY PAY OPERATING COSTS AND THAT IN FACT AN "AMORTIZATION" PAYMENT WAS INCLUDED IN THE PROPOSITION MADE TO THE FRENCH.

11. SCHNELL SAID THE GERMAN SIDE VERY MUCH HOPED THAT

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FM AMEMBASSY BONN
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THE GERMAN SHARE IN AWACS COSTS COULD BE REDUCED,
ALTHOUGH HE MADE IT CLEAR THIS WAS NOT A
MAJOR POINT. NEVERTHELESS, HE FELT THAT SUCH A
REDUCTION COULD HELP SIGNIFICANTLY VIS-A-VIS THE
BUNDESTAG.
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12. SCHNELL REFERRED TO CONCERN IN THE DEFENSE AND
BUDGET COMMITTEES OVER THE MILITARY SURVIVABILITY OF
AWACS. SOME MEMBERS HAD ASKED HOW MANY ADDITIONAL
FIGHTERS WOULD BE REQUIRED TO PROTECT THE AWACS FLEET.
THEY HAD ALSO ASKED ABOUT ECM VULNERABILITY.

13. SECRETARY BROWN SAID THE US SIDE WOULD BE HAPPY TO
PROVIDE ADDITIONAL INFORMATION ON THE SURVIVABILITY OF
AWACS. THIS COULD BE EITHER AN ORAL BRIEFING OR IN
WRITTEN FORM. STATE SECRETARY SCHNELL SUGGESTED IT BE
PROVIDED IN WRITING SO THAT IT COULD BE USED WITH THE
BUNDESTAG.

14. WHEN MINISTER APEL RETURNED TO THE CONFERENCE
TABLE FROM THE BUNDESTAG SESSION, HE BRIEFLY CONFIRMED
STATE SECRETARY SCHNELL'S MAIN STATEMENTS REGARDING
CONCERNS EXPRESSED BY THE BUNDESTAG COMMITTEES ON
APRIL 12. APEL SAID THE FACT THAT THERE WOULD BE NO
GEPARD LEASE OR PURCHASE WOULD "ENORMOUSLY
COMPLICATE" HIS TASK OF OBTAINING A BUNDESTAG "YES"
TO AWACS. HE SAID IT WAS UNLIKELY THAT A "YES" WOULD
COME BEFORE THE WASHINGTON SUMMIT; HE FELT IT WOULD
BE "AT LEAST FOUR TO SIX WEEKS" BEFORE A DECISION
COULD BE OBTAINED.

15. APEL SAID IT WAS PROBABLY BETTER FOR THE
BUNDESTAG TO HEAR THE NEWS ABOUT GEPARD NOW RATHER THAN
LATER. THIS WOULD GIVE HIM TIME TO TRY TO CONVINCE THE
BUNDESTAG COMMITTEE MEMBERS OF THE VALUE OF CERTAIN
OTHER ECONOMIC BENEFITS TO THE FRG -- THE US PURCHASE
OF GERMAN VEHICLES, LOCATION OF THE AWACS MOB IN
GERMANY, ETC. APEL SAID HE WOULD CONTINUE TO DO HIS

BEST TO OBTAIN A POSITIVE BUNDESTAG DECISION ON AWACS
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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: Z
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Draft Date: 14 apr 1978
Decaption Date: 20 Mar 2014
Decaption Note: 25 YEAR REVIEW
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TAGS: MPOL, MILI, GE, IT, FR, US, (APEL, HANS)
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